

Are You A "Ziploc Pack?"

Most leaders recognize that rank advancement ceremonies should be impressive and representative of the amount of work the boy has put into earning the award. But what about the belt loops, activity patches and other "smaller" awards your boys earn?

Unfortunately, these awards are often given out using the "Baggie and Handshake" ceremony. You know, a baggie with the boy's name, and a hearty handshake. No offense, but that's not PHUN! And Scouting, ESPECIALLY Cub Scouting, is supposed to be PHUN!

What many leaders don't realize is that these "minor" awards can be a blessing in disguise—a chance to really make your meetings exciting, and get parents and boys alike pumped up about the Scouting program!

So how do you polish up your pack meeting to be shiny and baggie free? Use your imagination! There's no limit to what you can do to award things to your boys, parents and leaders. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Shoot your awards in on balloons. Tie up a string with some cut straws, tape the award to the balloon, the balloon to the straws, and fill the balloon with air. When you release the air from the balloon, it will propel the award/balloon rocket down the string. Take on the role of "mission control" and with a little help from some willing parents you have a space themed recognition!
- Tape awards to the undersides of Frisbees and throw them out to boys standing in the back of the room. Have them throw them back to you, and let an assistant reload the Frisbees. Or mount them on paper airplanes for similar effect.
- Pot a dead tree or branch and put paper leaves on it with the awards stuck to the leaves for a conservation and nature themed ceremony.
- Place the awards in a piñata and let the boys go at it with a stick, one or two hits each. While they're taking their swings you can announce who got what.
- Hide the awards around the room and give each boy a treasure map that leads them to their award. Tell everyone what they received while they're looking. Or hide 'coins' that the boys can use to 'buy' their award from the Cubmaster, er, I mean Pirate King at the front of the room.
- Have them pan for gold nuggets and exchange them at the bank for their awards. You could make a speech about them being more precious than gold while you're at it.
- Dish them out of a pot dressed as a chef. Or make cupcakes or a cake and stick them in the icing on top.
- Have someone dressed as a delivery person "hand deliver" important packages to the boys during the meeting. Or have them dress as a military courier or paratrooper, with open parachute dragging behind them. (I'd make sure they took as lengthy a route through the room as possible in order to catch and twist the 'chute around as many things as possible. Ham it up!)
- Fire them from catapults your Webelos made. Make castle walls from refrigerator boxes and shoot from inside the castle (or outside, depending on where you want to be...)
- Give them out as carnival prizes, with each boy performing some simple, fun skill. (Don't make it so hard that your Tigers can't do whatever it is, and just get something handed to them.)

- Find someone who's good at magic or sleight of hand to conjure them out of the boys ears, from under their hats or neckerchiefs, etc.
- Put them inside Whiffle balls or balloons and hit them out to the boys with a big plastic bat. Let them "field" the award.

One month my assistant Cubmaster and I dressed as cowboys. We took the roles of Wells and Fargo, and were distributing the dividends of a successful summer of mining operations to our "employees" from a cardboard safe. Each boy got a small cloth bag marked "Gold—Property of:" and their name. Halfway through, another leader appeared to rob the bank. We wrapped him with a Mylar emergency blanket we had hidden behind the safe and pulled him out of the room as he shouted, "Drat! Foiled again!"

Another month, we dressed as pirates and distributed awards from a treasure chest, while punctuating the ceremony with a variety of pirate jokes.

It doesn't need to be elaborate, just fun and memorable. Use costumes, props and your imagination. Anything that requires throwing, catching, hitting, running, jumping, breaking, popping, bouncing, stomping, rolling, crawling, climbing, swinging or dropping is bound to bring a smile to the face of a nine-year-old. Don't be afraid to explore and write your own ceremonies!

Sean Scott

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'Twas the night of the pack meeting, when all through the place,
Not a Scout was stirring, anticipation on every face;
Their hopes were all high, could be felt in the air,
Wondering if an award soon was to be theirs;

The parents were ready with cameras in hand,
Ready to snap a shot of their lad;
And leaders in uniforms looking so fine,
Had all raised their hands in the Cub Scout sign;

When from out of the dark there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my post to see what was the matter.
Away to the doorway I flew in a hurry,
Tore open the door with my arms in a flurry;

When, what to my wondering eyes would appear,
But a box of advancements for some boys that are here;
These boys must have been working awfully hard,
To earn the badges attached to these cards;

For working on electives in his Big Bear Scout Book,
We can only imagine the days that it took;
Christopher _____ has faithfully earned,
An arrow point of silver to show what he's learned;

The Webelos, too, this month have been working,
On the Readyman achievement, they haven't been shirking;
Chris _____ surely has shown that he knows,
That for a victim in shock you raise legs, feet and toes;

And Matthew and Trevor, from our Den number one,
For completing achievements and having some fun;
Soon for their Arrow of Light will be set,
As a compass point each for their uniforms get;

A handful of patches were there for the taking,
Of each of our boys who did such wonderful baking;
They worked long and hard to make beautiful treats,
As good as they looked they must have been great to eat;

At last I came to the thing at the bottom,
One for each boy, whoever had brought 'em;
For each leader too, one size all would fit,
A patch that says we are a Quality Unit;

From where the awards came, by whom they were sent,
I know not, and now that the contents are spent;
Will your name, or yours, when next time we meet,
Be called as we celebrate a new set of feats?

Until then, I leave you with one last thought,
Scouting is more than just play and learning some knots;
A Scout gives good will and does what is right,

"HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL,
AND TO ALL A GOOD-NIGHT!"

Recognition For Adults

GENERAL PURPOSE AWARDS

- BADGE OF OFFICE AWARD**--This is a nice year-end thank you for your leaders. Mount the appropriate badge (i.e., Den leader, Cubmaster, etc.) on a wood plaque along with a message of appreciation.
- STAR AWARD**--This is a great thank you for someone who really shines at a job. Cut a large star out of metallic poster board (check an Art Supply store). Use rub-on letters to add your message.
- JEWEL AWARD**--Mount a large jewel-like ornament on a plaque, along with a message, including, "You're a Real Jewel (or Gem)"
- PACK FAMILY TREE**--Cut a slice of wood from a log. Glue on several nuts in the shell (acorns, almonds, peanuts, etc.). Glue tiny googly eyes on the nuts. Either burn a message in the wood, or use a permanent marker to write your message, including, "You're the nicest nut in our Pack Family Tree!"
- SKELETON AWARD**--Mount a tiny skeleton on a plaque, along with your message, including, "Thanks for working yourself to the bone for us!"

AWARDS FROM THE HEART

- Banana Award**--For the person with great appeal - (wax/plastic banana mounted on a plaque)
- Big Heart Award**--For those who always seem to have one (Heart shaped craft material, decorated)
- Bright Idea Award**--For those who had some bright ideas (light bulb mounted to a piece of wood)
- "Egg"cellent Job/Idea Award**--For those who did an excellent job (hard boiled egg mounted on a piece of wood) (FUN style--use a raw egg)
- Gold Kiss Award**--For those who REALLY deserve a kiss (Hershey's almond kiss - gold foil)
- Helping Hand Award**--For those who were willing to help (trace hand on construction paper & mount on a piece of cardboard)
- Life Saver Award**--For that person who saved you (lifesaver on a string)
- Hornblower Award**--For those who never/always blow their own horn. (Mount a plastic bicycle horn)
- Measure Up Award**--For the person whose performance set the standard (ruler mounted to a piece of wood)
- Nuts About The Job Award**--For the person who had to be nuts (2 or 3 peanuts glued to a piece of wood)
- Order Of The Spare Marble Award**--For the person who's lost 'em (marble glued to a small piece of wood/string)
- Ringy Dingy Award**--For those who are your phone call addicts. (Mount a plastic phone or two cans on a string)
- Scouting Spirit Award**--For those who show spirit (make a ghost from a ball & rag with the scout sign on it)
- Spark Plug Award**--For the person who is the spark of a project (spark plug mounted to a piece of wood)

SELF EXPLANATORY AWARDS

- Band-aid Award**--For those who can fix anything
- Key to Success Award**--For those who were key to making it happen
- Order Of The Level Award**--For the person who is one bubble short of plumb
- Soggy Shoe Award**--For the new adult hiker who wore loafers on the pack hike.
- Whale Award**--For those who did a whale of job
- Added A Spark Award**--4th of July sparkler
- Best Foot Forward Award**--12" ruler or a sock with the toe cut off
- Charged Us Up Award**--A battery
- Cheerleader Award**--Mount a stiff wire through a box of Cheer laundry soap and add pom poms to the wire
- Coveted "Dime And Pin" Award**--Glue a pin to a dime
- Plunged Right In Award**--Small sink plunger
- Really Tacky Award**--Mounted thumbtacks
- Right On Target Award**--A target pasted to cardboard with "writing" on it
- Rose To The Occasion Award**--An artificial or ribbon rose

Remember these are A W A R D S. How you make the presentation is just as important as the award itself, so ham it up - especially with some of the more humorous awards!!! Most require about five minutes of your time to make; many take even less. If it costs you money then you flunked Scouting 101!